



NEST OF A MALLARD IN THE ELEPHANT YARD.

against the bird's face will not cause her to move in the slightest degree. Even her eyes refuse to blink. An extended hand may almost touch her back, but an instant before the actual contact she will rush from her nest with loud cries of protest, and will not return until some time after the departure of the disturber. Both of the tiny houses in the enclosures of the coypu rats have been pressed into service as temporary nurseries by the ducks. Each is presided over by a demure mallard, and neither eggs nor young are ever disturbed by the rightful owners of the shelters. One of the houses, measuring perhaps eight by twelve feet, used for shelters for the mule deer, has a duck nest in each of two corners. The deer sleep here nightly and seek protection during storms, yet seem to exercise great care to avoid disturbing their guests. But perhaps the most eccentric nest of all is one placed in the yard of "Luna" the great Indian elephant, close up against a wall, behind a refuse box. "Luna" seems very proud of her little friend, and appears to have no desire to disturb her.

Another queer habit, which is doubtless a result of semi-domestication, is communal nesting, generally participated in by two ducks. These birds will either lay all their eggs in one nest, each incubating half, or they may build two nests, so close together that when both birds are sitting, it is quite difficult to say just how many there are on the nests. This joining of interests is a very strange peculiarity, and difficult of explanation, for it seems to serve no particular purpose.

L. S. C.

A WHITE RHINOCEROS HEAD.

THREE weeks ago, President Roosevelt advised the Zoological Society that he proposed to present to the National Collection of Heads and Horns the head of one of the white rhinoceroses that fell to his rifle in the Lado District. Naturally the news of this accession was hailed with the keenest satisfaction, partly because of the extreme rarity of the specimen, and partly because Colonel Roosevelt is to be represented in the National Collection by a specimen that is worthy to stand as a gift from the foremost sportsman of the world. At this moment there is not in all America a single mounted skin, nor even a mounted head, of a white rhinoceros; and we know of only one skull. In a short time, however, it is probable that more than one American museum will be enriched by the gift of a complete mountable skin of a full-grown specimen of that species.

To all zoologists and sportsmen who have not closely followed the explorations of Major Powell-Cotton in the Lado District, the development of a new territory containing white rhinoceroses has been overlooked. We must confess to profound surprise from the news that west of the Nile and Lake Albert there is a large area that evidently is well stocked with the "square-mouthed" rhinoceros, which, until recently, was regarded as being on the point of extinction. The narrative of Colonel Roosevelt's hunting explorations in that territory should be awaited by the public with very keen interest. Meanwhile, we find profound satisfaction in the fact that the National Collection of Heads and Horns is so soon to be enriched by another profoundly interesting, and also imposing, zoological rarity.

W. T. H.

A GREAT ELEPHANT HEAD.

THROUGH the kindness of Mr. Samuel Thorne,—for eleven years a member of the Board of Managers of the Zoological Park, and a member of the Executive Committee,—the National Collection of Heads and Horns has received, as a loan, the magnificent elephant head shot in British East Africa in 1906 by Mr. Richard Tjader, and mounted in the following year by Mr. Herbert Lang, at the American Museum of Natural History. The acquisition of this grand trophy, even as a loan, may well be regarded as a notable event in the history of the Heads and Horns Collection; and it is a